

DECEMBER 2, 1986

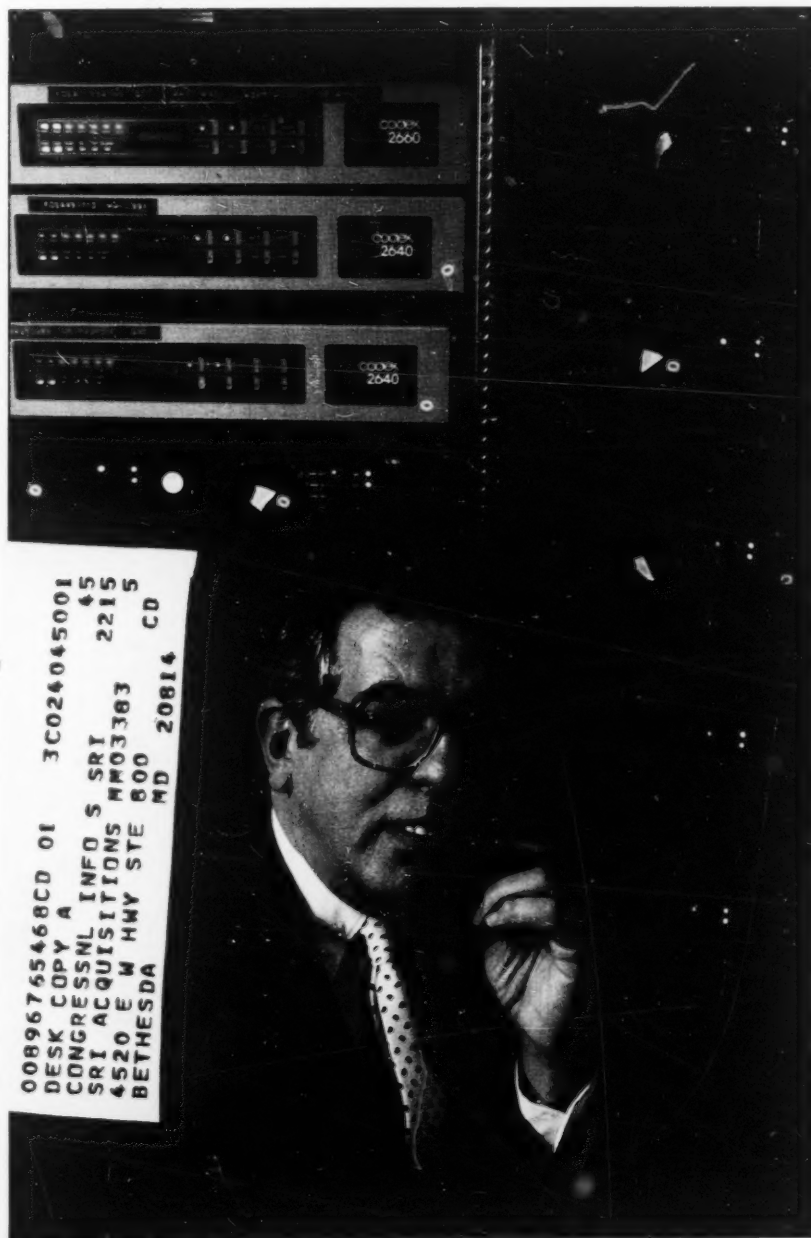
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- Project potential
- Optical storage now
- How MIS brings in relational DBMS
- Voice mail catches on
- CA builds on utilities

COMPUTER DECISIONS

THE MAGAZINE FOR MIS EXECUTIVES

A HAYDEN PUBLICATION



MIS BETS ON SMART NETS

MIS executives overseeing big private networks hope expert systems will automate network management and cut costs.

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Can a \$200,000 expert system automate network problem resolution? Metropolitan Life's MIS boss Daniel Cavanagh intends to find out.

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NETWORKS & COMMUNICATIONS

Cover Story



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STRATEGIC SYSTEMS

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my name. I happily went up and accepted my prize."

Unisys was only one of 300 names submitted by Machen. "I wasn't the only one that submitted numerous suggestions," he notes. "A fellow employee submitted 2,000 entries and used a computer program to generate different names. My ideas came from my own head."

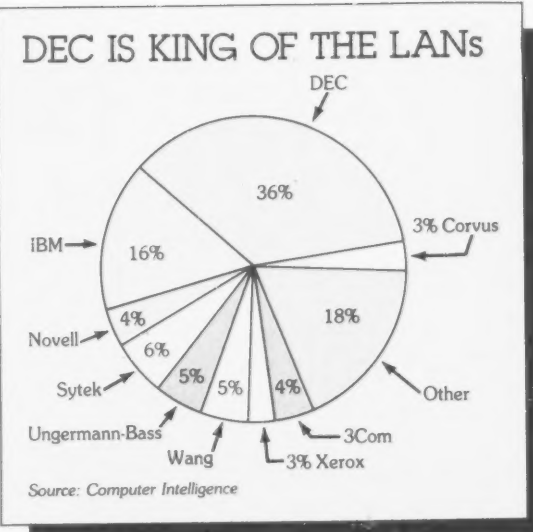
Multuser micro boom?

Forget the Intel 80386's increased speed and power. The most immediate benefit from the 32-bit chip, say many vendors, will come from its virtual machine mode function, which will efficiently allow multiple users to access MS-DOS applications running on one 386-based micro.

"The 386 signals the beginning of a multiuser boom," asserts Susan Catalano, president of Theos Software Corp. (Lafayette, CA). The vendor previewed Theos 386 and Theo DOS, new systems software for the 386, at last month's Comdex.

Although multiuser applications have been available for micros running under AT&T's Unix and Xenix from Microsoft Corp. (Redmond, WA), many users want multiuser capabilities for the more popular and prominent MS-DOS applications. Up to now, providing multiuser versions of MS-DOS software involved inelegant and costly solutions, such as attaching each terminal to a dedicated processor board on a shared micro.

Theos' new operating systems, as well as PC-MOS/386 from The Software Link Inc. (Atlanta), promise to unlock the func-



DEC's 36 percent share of the networks in a survey of mainly IBM mainframe sites gives credence to DEC President Ken Olsen's claim that his is "the" networking company. But there's hope for IBM. The survey also found that 31 percent of the respondents plan to install IBM LANs, but this still trails the 40 percent who plan to install DEC networks.

tionality of the 386's virtual machine mode and should allow as many as 20 MS-DOS applications to run concurrently at top speed, the vendors say. In effect, virtual mode turns inexpensive dumb terminals into 8086 micro clones, says Phil White, president of San Jose, CA-based Wyse Technology. Wyse showed a beta-test version of a 386-based micro at Comdex.

Other vendors demonstrating 386 machines priced from \$5,000 to \$7,000 at Comdex included Convergent Technologies Inc. (San Jose, CA), PCs Limited (Austin, TX), Kaypro Corp. (Solana Beach, CA), Multitech Electronics Inc. (Sunnyvale, CA), Zenith Data Systems (Glenview, IL), Laser Digital Inc. (Sunnyvale, CA), and Goldstar Co. Ltd. (Sunnyvale, CA). Rexon Inc. (Simi Valley, CA) introduced a

multiprocessor 386 machine accommodating up to 120 users for roughly \$50,000.

Memorex gets dismembered

Unisys Corp. (Detroit) agreed to sell for an estimated \$550 million much of its Memorex Corp. subsidiary to a group of Memorex executives and New York investor Eli Jacobs.

Unisys will still use Memorex's manufacturing facilities in Santa Clara, CA, to make IBM plug-compatible disk drives for the new Memorex, which will be headquartered in London. It will also use the plant to make disk drives for Burroughs and Sperry Corp machines.

Analysts see the sale as part of a plan by Unisys to reduce the debt incurred in

financing the \$4.8 billion purchase of Sperry Corp. by Burroughs.

DEC maps out connections

DEC's new network based on the Manufacturing Automation Protocol is the first full implementation of the standard by a major dp vendor.

VAX DEC/MAP allows users to run applications for a DECnet network and a MAP network serving factory devices in parallel on the same broadband cable. According to the vendor, data can be moved from DECnet to MAP through a host VAX if users write appropriate procedure calls. For example, users of Base-way, DEC's facility for machine tool programming, can transfer Baseway instructions from DECnet to DEC/MAP, although Base-way itself can't run on the MAP network.

VAX DEC/MAP is a full implementation of MAP Version 2.1, including protocols allowing for peer-to-peer communications. Of the seven layers of protocols in MAP, only two—those governing the physical connections—are implemented in hardware, on a special MAP modem from Concord Data Systems Inc. (Waltham, MA). The remainder are implemented in software running on a MAPserver/Plus Token Interface Module that runs in the host VAX.

VAX DEC/MAP requires MAPserver/Plus TIM software and cabling (\$12,000 to \$16,500) and a Concord MAP modem (\$5,745). Included in the price is network management software. The product will be available in January.